

Acts to Provide Financial Help for Social Security Recipients

Carmel, NY – In the wake of the announcement that there will be no Social Security cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in 2011, Congressman John Hall (NY-19) vowed to fight for a legislative solution when Congress reconvenes in November. Hall is an original co-sponsor of legislation which directs the Secretary of the Treasury to disburse a \$250 payment to recipients of Social Security, SSI (Supplemental Security Income under title XVI of the Social Security Act), railroad retirement benefits, and veterans disability compensation or pension benefits if no COLA is paid.

“In this economic climate, seniors and other Social Security recipients need benefits to help meet the rising costs of everyday expenses,” said Rep. Hall. “Without a COLA to provide some modest financial help—to pay bills and purchase necessities— this one time payment will help individuals and provide some boost to local economies as well.”

With expenses generally going up as wages and interest rates remain flat, people on fixed incomes who are dependent on Social Security benefits—mostly seniors—will see their monthly check amounts drop a bit. To compensate for this decrease, Rep. Hall has co-sponsored the Seniors Protection Act (H. R. 5987), which would deliver an additional \$250 check to Social Security recipients in lieu of the COLA increase.

This will be the second year in a row that the Congressional Budget Office has determined that Social Security recipients will not receive a benefit increase. Each year, COLA for Social Security is calculated by a formula closely modeled to the consumer price index. Until last year, benefits had risen annually since 1975; in 2009, the increase was 5.9 percent.

Last year, Rep. Hall was a co-sponsor of the Social Security COLA Fix Act of 2010.